Synopsis of 'Western Australia: Use & Abuse of the Post, 1831-1912'. 3 Frames.

Although choice items and a number of rarities are in this exhibit, the focus is on aspects of the postal system in Western Australia as illustrated by a particular item. Frames 1 and 2 deal with Colonial administration whilst the transition to Commonwealth control is treated in Frame 3.

Items are arranged in chronological order by date of posting and therefore the location of an item within the exhibit is pre-determined. This means that successive items rarely deal with the same aspect even though they may be superficially similar. Most items provide an array of aspects and the one selected is described above the item.

At first glance, this formal structure, with less emphasis on the item as an artefact, and more on aspects of the system exemplified by it may seem restrictive but that is not so.

Identifying as many as possible of the various aspects of an item requires extensive research in the primary and secondary sources.

Selecting the most appropriate aspect for the item at a particular location in the exhibit allows the exhibitor considerable choice and the viewer benefits because any one item can illuminate different aspects of the system and the one selected may not necessarily be the first that comes to mind.

Thus, the intrinsic attraction of the item and knowledge of the postal system are enhanced for both the viewer and the exhibitor. Monotony is minimised!

Charles Lawlor.

25 words for the Exhibit Description

You will see 'postage evasion', 'counter-intuitive routing', 'redirection', 'advertised and unclaimed', 'paid in cash', 'reply paid', 're-routing', 'undeliverable', 'resealing', 'prohibited Tattersall's mail' and 'disallowed franking'.